

St Joseph Naz College

Cortalim-Goa

National Library Week celebrated across the country from 14th-20th November every year.

Today we might take reading for granted but it has a very long history and there was a time when only a few people knew how to read. The first written communication did not happen until 3500 B.C., and the first books did not appear until around 23 B.C. in Rome. Around this time, books were also developed in some Asian countries and the Middle East. Before the printing press was introduced in the 15th century, books were quite expensive and rare but as printed books gained popularity, Literacy rates began to rise. In 1892, the first book covers appeared and in the 19th century, publishers started printing books with hardcovers.

Nowadays, even though almost everyone can read, people hardly read and, unfortunately we are losing our reading culture as a society. That is why we all need this **National Library Week** which is a whole week to help us revive our reading habits.



National Library Week
14th to 20th November

National Library Week is celebrated every year to commemorate the birthday of first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The celebrations all over the country commence from Children's Day i.e. 14 November and continue till 20 November. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru loved children. He envisaged a future where children will grow up in an environment of book reading and book buying.

The National Book Week, celebrated each year from November 14–20, is an initiative taken up by the National Book Trust, India to promote books in all Indian languages, including English, and also to create a culture of reading. The National Book Week programme is especially focused on children and young people in the country.

National Book Trust (NBT) was established on August 1, 1957. This organisation is the vision of the first prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. It was inaugurated by the then vice president of India, Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan in Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan. The NBT was instituted with an objective to spread the book-reading culture thereby creating a learning society. Since its formation, the Trust has been actively involved in the promotion and publication of books in all major Indian languages and for all age groups and segments of the society.

This week-long programme was launched in the year 1982 as a part of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of NBT. The first National Library Week was inaugurated by Jagmohan, Lt. Governor of Delhi, on 14 December 1982. On this occasion he also commissioned the first sales-cum-display van of the Trust. Over the years, NBT has stepped-up its activities to make the National Library Week more eventful and popular among people. In 1985, it introduced the concept of book bazaar as part of National Library Week celebrations. The first bazaar was held at Pyarelal Bhawan, New Delhi from 8–10 March 1985.

The National Book Week has become a fixed event in NBT's calendar and is celebrated throughout the country. The entire week is dedicated to books and several book related events like seminars, panel discussions, book-release functions and book exhibitions are organized by NBT in collaboration with renowned publishers and booksellers, NGOs and educational institutions of the country. Noted litterateurs, writers, illustrators and experts in the field of publishing, participate in these events.

The NBT runs a specific publicity campaign to announce the events and emphasise the value of books. During the week, advertisements in leading newspapers, special banners, posters and pamphlets are distributed in hundreds of schools, colleges, educational institutions and to book traders across the country spreading the message on importance of books. The Sahitya Academies across the country also organise programmes to celebrate the Library Week. Incidentally, the National Book Week coincides with the National Library Week in the country.

ILA declared 14 November as National Library Day. Since 1968, 14-20 November has been celebrated as National Library Week all over India and various programs are organized to let the public know about the libraries.



: The first printing press in India was introduced in Goa.

It was St. Francis Xavier who initiated the arrival of the printing press to India. He was a Christian missionary and was known to be teaching the Bible Tharangambadi, Tamil Nadu around the 1540s. During that time, the viceroy of Goa on behalf of King Joao III of Portugal set up schools for Indians. So St. Francis Xavier also asked Portugal to send printing presses to India, Japan and Ethiopia. Meanwhile the emperor of Ethiopia asked Portugal to send a printing press along with the Jesuit missionaries who would be coming by ship.

Thus Portugal sent a printing press with the Jesuit missionaries on a Spanish Ship in 1556. The prevalent route required the ship to go around the Cape of Good Hope and halt at Goa and then leave for Ethiopia. But as soon as the ship reached Goa, they received news that the Ethiopian Emperor was not keen at receiving the missionaries. Also simultaneously, the clergy of Goa felt the need of a printing press. They asked the Governor-General to make the press available to them. Hence, the printing press stayed in Goa, India. The first printing press in India was established at the Jesuit St. Paul's College in Old Goa in 1556. One of the first and the most famous books to be printed on this press was 'Catecismo da Doutrina Cristã'. This was written by St. Francis Xavier himself, but it was not printed until five years after his death.